EMW

Restricted Circulation

This paper is not an official document; it is for information only and reference cannot be made to it in any printed publication without the permission of the author.

AGRICULTURAL MEMORANDUM NO 552

Return Dates and Excess Winter Rains 1972 - 73

L P Smith

The period July 1972 to March 1973 was the driest such period over England and Wales as a whole since 1749 - 50, the similar period in 1933 - 34 being 15 mm wetter. The (national) total for October to March was 345 mm, the driest such period since 1809 - 10, although 1962 - 63 and 1943 - 44 were almost as dry.

Soil moisture deficits at the end of June were fairly low, so that this absence of rain was not quite so marked in return dates and excess rain as might be expected. Even so, at 11 of the 100 sample stations (following the lines of Tech Bull 24) did not show any return to capacity.

The annex shows the date for each sample station, together with the lowest excess winter rain total recorded in Tech Bull 24; the stations marked with an asterisk (*) indicate those which fell below the 20 year minimum. They fall into a very definite band down the eastern side of the country from Berwick to the English Channel.

Estimates of county averages of 1972 - 73 excess winter rains were provided in Ag Mem 550.

Any comments or suggestions on this paper should be referred to the author.

Meteorological Office
Bracknell

May 1973

County		Site	Return Date	Excess Rain		Lowest Excess Rain 1940 - 59
ENGLAND						
Bedford		Silsoe	Never	Nil	*	Nil
Berkshire	E	Reading	D. 3	1.5	*	2.2
	W	Wantage	D. 1	5.0		2.2
Buckingham	N	N Pagnell	D. 3	1.5		0.3
	S	G Missenden	D. 1	3.3	*	5.0
Cambridge	N	March	Jan 1	0.6		0.5
	S	Cambridge	Never	Nil	*	0.6
Cheshire		Delamere	N. 2	8.0		7.4
Cornwall	NW	St Mawgan	N. 1	17.8		6.6
	S	Lizard	N. 1	20.4		7.5
	SW	St Austell	N. 1	21.2		16.2
Cumberland	N	Carlisle	D. 1	5.3	*	6.6
	S	Newton Rigg	N. 2	10.7		7.0
Derby		Belper	N. 2	7.0		6.7
Devon	E	Exeter	N. 2	9.2		5.2
	NW	Hartland	N. 1	11.8		6.6
	SW	Plymouth	N. 2	10.5		8.5
Dorset		Blandford	N. 2	11.0		6.3
Durham	NE	Tynemouth	Never	Nil	*	3.1
	SW	Houghall	Jan 3	0.3	*	4.1
Essex	SE	Rickstones	Never	Nil	*	0.3
	NW	S Walden	Jan 3	0.4	*	0.5
Gloucester	NE	Cheltenham	D. 3	2.2		0.6
	SW	Bristol	N. 3	8.8		5.1
Hampshire	SE	Southsea	D. 2	3.6		2.7
	NE	Farnboro	D. 2	1.7	*	2.1
	NW	Leckford	N. 3	7.7		1.6
	SW	Bournemouth	D. 1	6.3		3.7
Isle of Wight		Ryde	D. 1	5.5		?
Hereford		Ross	D. 1	5.4		2.9
Hertford		Rothamsted	D. 2	3.3		2.3
Huntingdon		Houghton	Feb 3	0.1		Nil
Kent	Central	E Malling	Jan 1	1.1	*	2.9
	SE	Wye	D. 3	3.2		1.5
	NE	Margate	Feb 3	0.1	*	0.6
	W	Swanley	Never	Nil	*	0.8
Lancashire	Fylde	Blackpool	N. 2	8.4		5.2
	S	Ringway	N. 1	8.9		7.6
	Central	Bolton	O. 1	21.2		14.7
	Furness	Morecambe	N. 1	11.8		7.9
Leicester		N Linford	D. 1	4.1		2.6
Lincoln	Central	Cranwell	D. 3	1.4	*	1.4
	S	Spalding	Jan 3	0.3	*	1.0
	NE	Cleethorpes	Never	Nil	*	1.8

County		Site	Return Date	Excess Rain		Lowest Excess Rain 1940 - 59
ENGLAND (cont'd)						
Middlesex		Southgate	D. 3	1.6		1.3
Norfolk	W	K Lynn	D. 2	2.6		0.6
	Central	Marham	D. 3	1.5		1.0
	E	Burlingham	Jan 1	1.2		0.1
Northampton	NE	Kettering	D. 3	1.2	*	1.2
	SW	Hazelborough	D. 2	2.9		1.6
Northumberland	NE	Berwick	Never	Nil	*	1.4
	NW	Bellingham	N. 2	8.1	*	8.5
	S	Cockle Pk	Jan 3	0.5	*	4.5
Nottingham	N	Mansfield	N. 2	6.0		2.9
	S	S Bonnington	D. 2	3.5		2.1
Oxford	NW	Ch Norton	D. 2	4.4		1.9
	SE	Oxford	D. 2	2.2		1.1
Rutland		Tixover	D. 3	1.6		0.2
Shropshire		Monkmoor	D. 1	4.3		2.3
Somerset	N	Cannington	N. 3	6.4		4.1
	S	Martock	N. 3	8.4		1.2
Stafford	NW	Hanley	N. 2	7.7		6.9
	SE	Walsall	N. 3	6.9		5.4
Suffolk	NE	Lowestoft	Never	Nil	*	0.7
	SE	E Bergholt	Never	Nil	*	Nil
	W	Isleham	Never	Nil	*	Nil
Surrey	E	Croydon	D. 3	2.0		1.3
	W	Kew	Never	Nil	*	0.9
Sussex	W	Chichester	D. 2	3.5	*	4.1
	E	Bodiam	D. 1	6.6		2.6
Warwick	NW	Birmingham	N. 3	6.5		4.5
	SE	Leamington	D. 3	1.3		Nil
Westmorland		Briery	O. 2	32.2	*	33.4
Wiltshire	N	Lacock	D. 1	4.9	*	5.3
	S	Boscombe	N. 3	6.7		3.4
Worcester		Redhill	D. 2	4.0		1.4
Yorkshire	WR	Ilkley	N. 3	7.3		9.7
		Wakefield	D. 2	2.6	*	2.7
		Finningley	Jan 3	0.4	*	0.4
		A Bryan	D. 1	2.3		2.0
	ER	Lowthorpe	D. 2	2.4	*	2.7
		Hull	Jan 1	0.9	*	1.7
	NR	Ampleforth	D. 1	3.6		4.2
		Leeming	D. 3	1.5		?

County	Site	Return Date	Excess Rain		Lowest Excess Rain 1940 - 59
WALES					
Anglesey	Esgob	N. 1	14.0		7.8
Brecon	Brecon	0.1	27.4		13.0
Carnarvon	Conway	N. 1	15.4		3.5
Cardigan	Aberporth	N. 2	9.2	*	10.0
Carmarthen	Carmarthen	0.3	19.5		15.6
Denbigh	Denbigh	N. 2	9.1		6.3
	Wrexham	N. 3	8.4		9.5
Flint	Hanmer	N. 2	7.3		5.0
Glamorgan	Cardiff	N. 1	12.5	*	12.8
Merioneth	Arthog	N. 1	12.4	*	12.8
	Derwen	N. 1	13.1		10.0
Monmouth	Usk	N. 1	13.8		7.8
Montgomery	Welshpool	N. 2	8.2		6.0
Pembroke	Pembroke	N. 1	14.6		12.8
Radnor	Radnor	N. 1	13.0		12.9